

URTICA CHAMAEDRYOIDES PURSH (URTICACEAE)
REPORTED AS NEW TO CUBA

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ABSTRACT

Urtica chamaedryoides is reported for the first time to Cuba.

Key Words: Urticaceae, Cuba, Systematics, Urtica.

While examining specimens for a taxonomic treatment of *Urtica* L. for Latin America, three Cuban collections from the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University struck me as being unusual. They were originally identified as *Urtica urens* L., a species introduced from Europe and recorded from Cuba by León and Alain (1951). On closer examination, however, they have proven to represent *Urtica chamaedryoides* Pursh, an annual species widely distributed in the southeastern United States from Southern Ohio, southern Illinois west to southeastern Kansas, south to central Florida, Texas and Louisiana, and also occurring in Mexico (Woodland et al., 1976).

Specimens examined: CUBA; Plantae Cubensis Wrightianae, *C. Wright 3681*, s.d. (GH); **Santa Clara Province**, Las Lagunas, Buenos Aires, about 2500 ft. alt., 21 April 1930, *J. G. Jack 7943* (GH); **Las Villas Province**, Trinidad Mountains, San Blas-Buenos Aires, Finca La Carida, 1 June 1942, *A. González 485* (GH). The first specimen has no locality information (and is not cited in Grisebach's (1866) work on Wright collections), localities of the two others could not be located precisely, but it is clear that they come from the same general area in the Sierra de Trinidad, located at the junction of the present provinces of Cienfuegos, Villaclara, and Sancti Spiritus.

Urtica chamaedryoides in its North American continental range is found growing in humid, rich soils of bottom lands and flood plains, rich woods, and waste places (Woodland *et al.*, 1976). Although there is no ecological information available for the collections cited above, their occurrence in a montane habitat, typical for *Urtica* in the tropics, suggest that this species is indeed native to Cuba.

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